

# Code of Ethics and Conduct

*WorldSkills International*

# General information and impact

## Scope

WorldSkills showcases the value of skills and improves the recognition of skilled professionals worldwide. Skills are the foundation of modern life. Everything, from the homes we live in to the societies we create, are the result of the work of skilled professionals. These skilled professionals and the training systems they represent are the driving force behind successful careers, companies, thriving industries, and economies.

In a global economy such success is derived from social and economic sustainable development. The WorldSkills contribution is responsible within the six focus areas of Research, Promoting Skills, Career Building, Education and Training, International Cooperation and Development, and Skills Competitions.

WorldSkills recognizes and upholds the special responsibility that Members, officers, officials, and partners must undertake in acting as role models for the students and young professionals we influence who come from many different cultural, social, and economic backgrounds. When becoming a Member, a partner, or entering into a cooperation with WorldSkills, all persons and organizations are expected to honour and practise the living values and policies that are collectively referred to as the WorldSkills Code of Ethics and Conduct.

- The Code of Ethics describes WorldSkills values and ethical foundations.
- The Code of Conduct describes how ethical behaviour is promoted and implemented in the everyday work of the organization.
- This code applies to all of the operations of WorldSkills, including internal and external dealings with colleagues, Members, and stakeholders, and sets out the minimum standards of behaviour expected by WorldSkills for any person who represents WorldSkills or the WorldSkills brand or appears to represent WorldSkills by association in any capacity.
- The work of WorldSkills occurs in six key areas each of which have specific action plans and timelines.

## Impact

When creating new documents, policies, procedures, or rules, including Competition Rules, developers must refer to this Code of Ethics and Conduct to ensure philosophical and operational compliance with all the standards herein.

### Vision

To Improve our world with the power of skills.

### Mission

To raise the profile and recognition of skilled people, and show how important skills are in achieving economic growth and personal success.

### Position

The global hub for skills excellence and development.

# Code of Ethics

WorldSkills values, ethical foundation, and to whom it is applicable.

## Values and ethical foundations

The core values of WorldSkills are excellence, diversity, fairness, innovation, integrity, partnership and transparency.

With over 65 years of history, WorldSkills, through its core business of competitions, has promoted excellence through a value driven performance culture to promote skills development and high standards of performance as achievement goals for all members of society. Consequently, such standards are now minimal expectations for all persons who support or represent the WorldSkills brand and identity.

## Scope

This code applies to all of the operations of WorldSkills, including internal and external dealings with colleagues, Members, and stakeholders, and sets out the minimum standards of behaviour expected by WorldSkills for any person who represents WorldSkills or the WorldSkills brand or appears to represent WorldSkills by association in any capacity. In general, this means any person who may be legitimately accredited to attend a WorldSkills General Assembly or Competition and includes, but is not limited to, the Board, Member delegates, Official Observers, Observers, sponsor and partner representatives, representatives of the WorldSkills Champions Trust, Experts, Team Leaders, Interpreters, trainers, Competitors, sponsors, partners, volunteers, Secretariat and extended Secretariat, Competition Organizers, members of bidding delegations, and trustees of the WorldSkills Foundation.

## Commitment to human rights

WorldSkills expects its Members and partners to respect the behaviours described in the following:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
[www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/](http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/)
- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights  
[www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx)
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
[www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx)
- The ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work  
[www.ilo.org/declaration/thedeclaration/lang--en/](http://www.ilo.org/declaration/thedeclaration/lang--en/)
- The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals  
<http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1>

The UN Women HeForShe campaign  
[www.heforshe.org/](http://www.heforshe.org/)

## Environment

A sustainable and healthy environment is critical for all human life. WorldSkills is committed to reducing environmental impact in all our conduct and operations and will integrate environmental values in our processes and relations when working in the six focus areas with Members and partners.

## Member of the global community

WorldSkills acknowledges that it is a member of an evolving global community and accepts its responsibilities with diligence and aforethought, but recognizes that it can only be accountable for areas over which it has total control. WorldSkills will strive to associate and partner with other organizations which embrace similar values and high standards, and will endeavour to influence others in all areas in which it operates.

# Code of Conduct

How we will promote and implement ethical behaviour in the organization's every day work.

## Introduction

This Code of Conduct provides firm descriptions of ethical behaviour for our global movement, taking into account the cultural, social, and economic diversity of the WorldSkills community.

## Scope

This code applies to all persons who represent WorldSkills or the WorldSkills brand or appears to represent WorldSkills by association in any capacity. It serves as a guide to the Board, Secretariat, Member representatives and staff in their day-to-day work, interactions, and decision making. All persons representing the brand and the movement must be committed to uphold the highest standards of integrity and accountability, to act according to the core values and ethical principles of WorldSkills and to promote and advocate for these values and principles. Members and their representatives must be aware that they have a special role to play in promoting the movement and its ideals to all stakeholders.

The code's value to the WorldSkills movement lies in its ability to create and guide an enhancing environment in which to grow a culture of integrity, transparency, fairness, partnership, and innovation.

## Ethical principles of the organization

As a membership organization, we will work co-operatively with all individuals, countries and regions, with for profit and not for profit corporations and organizations, and with governments and international bodies, subject only to the policies and priorities set by our governing bodies. Further:

- We undertake to be open, honest, and accountable in our relationships with everyone with whom we work and with each other.
- We will perform our duties honestly, faithfully, and efficiently, respecting the human, professional and privacy rights of our Members and of our colleagues.
- We will be politically non-partisan and non-sectarian in our work.
- We will resolve conflicts in a transparent, constructive manner while respecting the human, professional, and privacy rights of those affected and disclose details only where it is in the interest of the global movement.
- We will not tolerate harassment or sexual harassment in any of our activities.
- We will only accept funding that does not compromise our ability to address issues freely, thoroughly, objectively, and in the best interests of the brand.
- We will not tolerate bribery or corruption in any form. We will promote a value driven performance culture to cultivate and sustain a legacy of trust in all those with whom we interact.
- We will consult actively with Members who are directly impacted by the development and implementation of new policy.
- We will maintain the highest standards of integrity when making commitments for a programme or service delivery.

## Practical guidelines

### Basic standards of conduct

WorldSkills recognizes that people in different roles often behave differently. The following descriptions are the basic standards of behaviour that will be role modelled by members of the Board, members of the Secretariat, and accredited personnel. They may be translated by all other persons who represent WorldSkills or the

WorldSkills brand into their WorldSkills role and circumstances and act as a guide for their own behaviour in similar situations. Members, stakeholders and partners are encouraged to use these standards of conduct to inform their own circumstances.

## Board and CEO

Members of the Board and the CEO subscribe to the seven principles of public life, as they were defined by the Committee for Standards in Public Life<sup>1</sup>. The language has been adapted for WorldSkills purposes and are as follows:

### 1. **Selflessness**

Members of the Board and the CEO will at all times act solely in terms of the interest of the WorldSkills brand and will not do anything in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

### 2. **Integrity**

Members of the Board and the CEO will not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organizations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### 3. **Objectivity**

Members of the Board and the CEO will make choices based on merit when conducting WorldSkills business, including making appointments, awarding contracts, and recommending individuals for rewards and benefits.

### 4. **Accountability**

Members of the Board and the CEO are accountable for their decisions and actions to Members and stakeholders and will submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### 5. **Openness**

Members of the Board and the CEO will be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. Reasons for decisions will normally be disclosed unless individual, Member, or stakeholder integrity or privacy could be compromised.

### 6. **Honesty**

Members of the Board and the CEO will declare any private interests relating to their WorldSkills duties and will take steps to resolve any consequential conflicts in a way that protects the WorldSkills brand.

### 7. **Leadership**

Members of the Board and the CEO will promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

## Secretariat

- Members of the Secretariat will treat each other and those with whom they work with respect and consideration, being sensitive to the diversity of WorldSkills, including differences in cultural background, gender, region, religion, disability, family status, and sexual orientation.
- Members of the Secretariat will communicate and consult with each other openly and collegially and in a manner that assists them to fulfil their duties and responsibilities faithfully and efficiently.
- Members of the Secretariat will respect the privacy and private lives of their colleagues when dealing with personal information.
- WorldSkills undertakes to ensure adequate consultation with any Secretariat member before making any decision which may impact that Secretariat member.

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<sup>1</sup> known as the Nolan Principles: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life)

## Accredited personnel

WorldSkills recognizes that persons appointed to WorldSkills positions are selected by the Member primarily for their national responsibilities and team performance at a WorldSkills Competition. However, these persons must also fulfil responsibilities to WorldSkills by ensuring that the preparation and delivery of the skills competitions are carried out according to the Competition Rules and the Code of Ethics and Conduct which encompasses a duty of honesty, integrity, and care to every Competitor and their fellow accredited personnel – as symbolized by the Oaths.

Consequently, any appointed or accredited person who attempts by any means to influence or advantage the outcome in any competition by a breach of the Code of Ethics and Conduct or the Rules brings disrepute not only to themselves but to their team, their Member country/region and WorldSkills. The consequences of such behaviour may therefore have a serious impact on their participation and participation of the Member both currently and in the future. (Refer to consequences, sanctions, and penalties).

## Other elements of conduct

### Compliance with law

WorldSkills will comply with the laws and regulations applicable wherever it holds its activities and ensure staff have appropriate training to minimize potential legal risk.

### Business integrity

WorldSkills strives to be a good corporate citizen and to fulfil its responsibilities to the societies and communities in which it operates.

### Financial independence

WorldSkills will not accept funds that might impair the independence or reputation of the organization to pursue its mission. To this end, WorldSkills will:

- accept resources only from donors who share WorldSkills objectives and values;
- seek a balanced distribution between resources obtained from the public sector, private sector, foundations and charities, and contributions from individuals;
- seek a multitude of donors in any of the aforementioned categories; and
- not accept resources granted under a condition or structured such that WorldSkills refrains from independent action, pursues activities inconsistent with its mission, or refrains from pursuing activities consistent with its mission.

### Hospitality, gifts, cultural integrity, and anti-corruption

- WorldSkills recognizes that the terms hosting and hospitality mean different things and are used differently in many cultures. When hosting an event which is inclusive of receptions and meals WorldSkills respects the culture of the host but encourages planning with economical prudence and modesty.
- WorldSkills recognizes and applauds excellence in the performing arts as it mirrors the excellence we embrace in our own events and the effort of that achievement matches with the culture of hard work that we strive to cultivate. We promote the planning of such displays that highlights the talent and achievement of the performers rather than lavish or extravagant treatment of the audience.
- Similarly, WorldSkills recognizes that in many Member cultures the giving and receiving of gifts is an important aspect of establishing relationships and demonstrating respect for another party. Consequently, WorldSkills will allow this practice providing the gift exchanges takes place during a personal exchange between individuals and is both modest in nature and reflective of the culture of the giver, e.g. the exchange of tokens of professional friendship between Experts in a workshop.
- The mass provision of gifts to large groups or meeting participants is actively discouraged.

- The provision of expensive gifts, lavish hospitality, meals, travel vouchers or promises, or accommodation which are designed, or may be perceived as, attempts to gain favour or influence decision making are expressly prohibited in all circumstances.
- WorldSkills requires integrity and fair practices in all aspects of its own activities through compliance with all elements of this Code of Ethics and Conduct and expects the same standards of those with whom we have relationships.
- WorldSkills does not tolerate corruption and prohibits bribery in any form, whether actual or perceived.

### **Risk management and data protection**

- WorldSkills will implement risk management strategies for all areas of operations and implement procedures to protect and uphold brand integrity and reputation.
- WorldSkills will establish its own standards of data integrity and comply with the relevant principles governing data protection in each country in which it holds activities.

## **Consequences, sanctions, and penalties**

A deliberate, premeditated or blatant breach of the standards of behaviour set forth herein by a WorldSkills representative may be subject to the imposition of a range of sanctions or penalties.

The Board, either directly or through its officials, is authorized to determine the:

- sanction or penalty to be applied,
- the effective date or dates for the sanction or penalty, and
- the duration for the sanction or penalty.

In all cases officials will make judgements on the basis of “irrefutable evidence” and will be guided by these ethical principles and the principle(s) of natural justice and at all times strive to balance collective responsibility with individual justice.

There are of many and various kinds of sanctions or penalties that could be applied in any given situation. The range may include but is not restricted to

- a verbal or written reprimand,
- suspension of participation in a Competition, event or General Assembly,
- exclusion from a Competition, event or General Assembly,
- financial penalty to a Member,
- withdrawal of all or selective membership privileges,
- removal from a bidding process, or
- in extreme cases, a recommendation to the General Assembly for Member expulsion. (Reference: Constitution 4.6).

The Board may establish and delegate its authority for penalties or sanctions to an Ethics Committee or similarly named committee and determine the scope of that committee’s authority along with its power to recommend.

### **Current jurisdictions**

(Alleged) breaches of the Rules associated with skills competitions are dealt with in the Competitions Committee.

(Alleged) breaches of the Code of Ethics and Conduct at the Competition related to skills competitions that are not covered by the Rules are dealt with by a Hearings Committee.

(Alleged) breaches of the Code of Ethics and Conduct (including at the Competition but not related to skills competitions) are dealt with by the Board and/or an Ethics Committee.



## Amendments

This document will be reviewed by the Board prior to each General Assembly to ensure currency and relevance. Recommended changes will be submitted to the General Assembly for ratification.